

The Federal Diary

25 Aides to Get Executive Training

By
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Federal agencies are priming their best — or favorite — mid-management people for nomination to an elite training program that virtually assures Grade 15 workers of powerful and top-paying supergrade assignments.

The special training, to begin next March, will include tailored training at the executive institute in Charlottesville, "enrichment" tours of unity with the Office of Management and Budget and reassignment to high-potential jobs.

Only 25 of the Grade 15 or equivalent employees will be chosen for this experimental program, from a total of more than 25,000 at that pay-grade level. Employees are supposed to be able to nominate themselves, by Aug. 10 to their own agencies. Agencies will make the initial picks by mid-December.

Every Grade 15 employee registered with the Civil Service Commission's executive inventory is supposed to have been contacted with details of the program. Those who haven't—and there are some—should get details from agency personnel offices.

Idea behind the program—besides seeing if it works—is to give the would-be supergraders (GS 16, 17 and 18) the "big picture" view of the bureaucracy. Those selected who have never worked outside of Washington will be temporarily detailed to field jobs; those from the field will come here.

The students will also sit in on congressional hearings, press conferences and budget sessions. As future generals, the government wants them to know what sort of actual flak their personnel will be required to take in the real world away from government offices and meetings.

Competition will be fierce for the 25 vacancies. Some candidates have already attempted to trot out political recommendations, both from Capitol Hill and administration friends as well as from within their own agencies. Final selection will be made by a National Selection Board

"composed of persons who have distinguished themselves in the field of public service."

Much of the key work, however, will be done first by agencies themselves as they weed out applicants who, in the agency opinion, would be wasting everybody's time and money. Employees who get the green light will continue to be paid by their own agency, although CSC and the Office of Management and Budget will pay administrative costs.

Agencies, meantime, have been told to find or create top-management jobs that can be given to the returning graduates. Grade squeezes and freezes won't apply to the lucky 25 who, as nominators realize, could very well soon outrank current bosses.

Would You Believe The Danville Tapes? The government has settled, finally, the complex case of a VA nursing assistant charged with covering up mistreatment of a patient.

To be specific she was accused of applying a strip of adhesive tape to the mouth of a patient who was interrupting television-viewing of fellow patients.

After everybody was ungagged and had their say, it turned out the accused nurse hadn't done the taping, but had witnessed it. She was then charged by VA with concealment.

To make things more complicated, her union counter-charged that she had been forced to turn "stool pigeon" on a fellow nurse, to clear herself of an unjust charge.

The hearing before an arbitrator was so complex that he tape-recorded the entire proceedings. Shortly thereafter, thieves stole the tapes, along with the arbitrator's car.

The arbitrator then worked to reconstruct the hearing, while the police looked for the car. A month later they found tapes and car.

Bloodied but not beaten, the arbitrator then pushed on to make his decision. Unfortunately, he then lost the tapes on his own.

A decision was reached, somehow. The decision was that somebody got a reprimand. We are confused, however, as to whether it was the first nurse, the second nurse, the talkative patient, a policeman, or the arbitrator. But rest assured somebody got it.

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